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N.S. Companies Lead Way in Workplace Literacy

Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)
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Two of the three national winners of the 1998 Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy are Nova Scotian companies.

Russel Metals Inc. of Lakeside and National Sea Products Ltd. of Lunenburg were honoured this week at the 1998 Business, Education and the Community Conference in Ottawa. The winners were selected from more than 150 entries from across Canada.

Education and Culture Minister Robbie Harrison applauded both companies for their commitment to workplace literacy.

"Russel Metals and National Sea Products are excellent examples -- not only in Nova Scotia but across Canada -- of what can be accomplished when we make literacy a priority in the workplace."

One winner was selected in each of three categories: small, medium-sized and large businesses. Russel Metals receives the award in the small-business category and National Sea Products is being honoured as the large-business winner.

In response to their employees' desire to raise basic skill levels and meet work demands, Russel Metals implemented a workplace education program in 1996. To date, 26 of 70 employees have participated in workplace education.

Facing challenges from increased global competition, declining stocks and new technology, National Sea Products launched its workplace skills training program in 1994. By enhancing the education and skills of its employees, National Sea Products is helping them to advance their careers.

Both the company and employee benefit from workplace education programs. At Russel Metals, skills gained from workplace education programs have increased the success of job-related training programs, such as the ISO 9000 quality assurance program.

"For employees, success in meeting their goals translates into increased confidence and self-esteem," said Marjorie Davison, workplace education program co-ordinator with the Department of Education and Culture. "As a result, morale is improved and employees gain a greater sense of personal involvement in the business and community."

The Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy are sponsored by the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada and co-ordinated by the Conference Board of Canada. The awards recognize and reward innovative and effective workplace literacy programs.

NOTE: The following is intended for use by broadcast media.

A couple of Nova Scotian companies are being honoured for leading the way in workplace education.

Russel Metals Incorporated of Lakeside and National Sea Products Limited of Lunenburg have taken two of three national "Awards of Excellence in Workplace Literacy."

The two companies are being recognized for developing innovative literacy programs in their workplace.

The awards were given out this week in Ottawa. They're sponsored by the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada and co-ordinated by the Conference Board of Canada.

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